United Nations

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ United Nations confirms reports of use of aircraft to bomb targets in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the first time since "no fly-zone" was instituted by Security Council last October; aircraft not identified.

+ Admiral Jonathan Howe, Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, to participate in Conference on National Reconciliation in Somalia in Addis Ababa on Thursday.

+ Secretary-General's Special Representative for Haiti, Dante Caputo, to begin open-ended visit to Haiti this weekend; head of United Nations component of international mission in Haiti, at press conference at Headquarters, says Mission has reduced tensions in areas of its deployment.

+ Secretary-General, in Boston to receive award, says peace-keeping, development and democratization are three great tasks and priorities of United Nations.

+ Co-Chairmen of Yugoslav Conference meet with five Permanent Members of Security Council; Bosnian peace talks scheduled to resume later this week.

+ In Geneva, Director-General of United Nations Office tells Ambassador of Republic of Korea of his concern over growing tension in Korean Peninsula; urges maximum restraint by all parties involved.

+ Commission on Status of Women to begin thirty-seventh session in Vienna tomorrow; to consider draft declaration on violence against women, among other things.

+ United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia blames National Alliance for a Democratic Kampuchea for last Wednesday's "massacre" of 35 people near Siem Reap, according to UNTAC spokesman.

+ Preparatory Committee for Fiftieth Anniversary of United Nations decides to draft solemn declaration to mark occasion in 1995.

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For information media--not an official record

The United Nations today confirmed reports that aircraft has been used to bomb targets in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for the first time since the Security Council instituted the "no fly-zone" over that country under resolution 781 last October. The United Nations has not been able to determine to whom the aircraft belonged.

According to a press release issued by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Zagreb today, three aircraft dropped bombs on the villages of Gladovici and Osatica, east of Srebrenica, on 13 March, before leaving in the direction of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). Since early November last year, the United Nations has observed 465 violations of the "no fly-zone" over Bosnia and Herzegovina, but not until now has it been able to conclude that the violations involved bombing or other attacks on ground targets.

The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Haiti, Dante Caputo, will begin an open-ended visit to Haiti this weekend, during which he will be travelling outside Port-au-Prince, a United Nations spokesman said today.

For the past few weeks, Mr. Caputo has held political consultations concerning the deployment of the joint United Nations/Organization of American States (OAS) Mission in Haiti, which began about two weeks ago. He has also met with Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and with senior officials of certain United Nations Member States known as "Friends of the Secretary-General".

Meanwhile, the head of the United Nations component of the international mission in Haiti, Michael Moller, who is the Deputy Director of the Americas Division in the Department of Political Affairs, told correspondents today that at the present time there are just over a hundred observers on the ground. He said the Mission, which was monitoring the human rights situation in Haiti, would initiate investigations of violations of human rights and confer with local authorities on these matters.

Mr. Moller noted that the Mission had had a "sobering and calming effect" on the local population in areas of its deployment. Tensions had subsided and the presence of armed military had declined since the Mission arrived, he said. So far, most of the observers were from the OAS, while the United Nations was awaiting the final word from the General Assembly. The United Nations and the OAS would share the costs of the operation in Haiti, Mr. Moller said.

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The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, Admiral Jonathan Howe, will travel to Addis Ababa on Thursday to participate in the Conference on National Reconciliation in Somalia, according to a United Nations spokesman. Admiral Howe is scheduled to reach Mogadishu tomorrow. The Force Commander of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II),

Lieutenant-General Cevik Bir of Turkey, arrived in the Somali capital yesterday, the spokesman said.

Meanwhile, according to a summary of the continuing Conference in Addis Ababa issued at Headquarters today, representatives of the various Somali political movements, community leaders and non-governmental organizations have presented proposals on the need to create a transitional structure in Somalia and to preserve the country's unity and integrity. The speakers "exhorted" their compatriots to facilitate and make "more secure" the work of the humanitarian relief community.

Some of the representatives also stressed the necessity to restore the "properties" of people who were "forcibly" dispossessed of their land and other assets, the summary said.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in speech delivered in Boston today upon receiving the Christian Herter Award from the Boston World Affairs Council, addressed the "three great tasks and priorities of the United Nations": peace-keeping, development and democratization.

The United Nations had started as many new peace-keeping operations in the past four years as in the previous forty-three years, he noted, adding that the Organization's peace-keeping costs for 1992 exceeded $3 billion, more than three times any previous annual figure.

He went on to say that today's operations were not peace-keeping in the traditional sense, but took place where there was "no peace to keep". United Nations forces today protected relief shipments, provided services for victims, enforced embargoes, removed mines and tried to confiscate arms. In addition, United Nations operations now involved a large civilian dimension, including the monitoring of elections, public safety and information and communication.

With regard to development, Mr. Boutros-Ghali emphasized that without a new and workable concept, the United Nations would face an endless sequence of conflicts like the ones confronting the world now. Development could help prevent conflict from breaking out by engaging people's energies positively, he said.

On democratization, he noted that the real development of a State must be based on the participation of its population, that required human rights and democracy. To ensure such an achievement, democratization must not only take hold inside a State, but among States in the international community, he said.

Development and democratization could not fully succeed where human rights were neglected, he concluded. The United Nations Charter placed the promotion of human rights as one of its principal priority and, in recent years, the Organization had ventured into an entirely new field: "long-term, nationwide monitoring of human rights".

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Press Release DH/1351
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The Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on former Yugoslavia, Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen, met this morning with representatives of the five Permanent Members of the Security Council: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States.

According to Fred Eckhard, spokesman for the Co-Chairmen, the Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, and the Bosnian Croat leader, Mate Boban, would arrive in New York late today. President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was expected later this week, he said. Also scheduled to arrive this week was the Foreign Minister of Serbia.

In Geneva, talks concerning the Serb-controlled Krajina were held this morning with Croatian Government authorities. The Krajina Serbs were expected to arrive in Geneva tomorrow afternoon to attend.

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At a meeting in Geneva today, the Director-General of the United Nations Office in Geneva, Vladimir Petrovsky, told the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea, Soo Gil Park, of his concern over the growing tension in the Korean Peninsula and stressed that maximum restraint was needed by all parties involved to settle the problem by dialogue and negotiations.

Mr. Park met with the United Nations Director-General to inform him of his country's position with respect to the decision by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Mr. Petrovsky's statement to the South Korean Ambassador was issued at Headquarters as a note to correspondents.

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The Commission on the Status of Women will open its thirty-seventh session in Vienna tomorrow with the consideration of a draft declaration on the elimination of violence against women among the major issues to be considered. It will also consider preparations for the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights and for a fourth World Conference on Women.

The draft declaration on violence against women, which was prepared by an intersessional group of the Commission, affirms that violence impairs or nullifies women's enjoyment of human rights and freedoms; recognizes that such violence is a "manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women" and identifies it as "one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position as compared to men".

Under the priority themes for the current session -- which are intended to contribute to the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies in the areas of equality, development and peace -- the Commission will consider the

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question of increasing women's awareness of their rights, including measures to promote their legal literacy; the situation of women in extreme poverty and efforts to integrate women's concerns in national development planning; and women in the peace process, including women's role in the military.

Other matters to be discussed by the Commission include women's role in the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse (1991 - 2000); the situation of Palestinian women in the occupied Arab territories and in the refugee camps, and assistance to women and children living under apartheid. Also to be examined will be ongoing efforts to improve the status of women in the Secretariat.

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The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) has blamed the forces of the National Alliance for a Democratic Kampuchea (NADK) for last Wednesday's "massacre" of 35 Vietnamese-speaking fishermen, women and children on Tonle Sap Lake near Siem Reap.

According to the spokesman for UNTAC, Eric Falt, the Civilian Police team, which conducted the investigations, had established the facts about the involvement of the NADK in the killings. The sole motive for the attack appeared to have been to "terrorize and to kill", he said. The findings were based on the statement of eyewitnesses.

The group, armed with AK-47 rifles, machine guns and rocket launchers had entered five different houseboats in the fishing village located just south of the provincial capital of Siem Reap and shot the people living there. Some 24 people were also injured in the attack.

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The Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, at a meeting held at Headquarters today, decided to establish an open-ended working group to draft a solemn declaration to mark the observance of the occasion in 1995. The working group would hold its first meeting sometime between Easter and the Committee's next meeting on 23 April, the Chairman of the Committee, Richard Butler of Australia, said.

The representative of Mexico, Manuel Tello, said the fiftieth anniversary celebration should include, among its objectives, the responsibilities of individual States to increase public awareness of the United Nations role and to enhance solidarity with the goals of the Organization.

The Committee also discussed augmenting the Secretary-General's proposed theme for the celebration, "We the Peoples", with concepts from the United Nations Charter, including peace, equality, justice and development.

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